



## Barbara Pedersen

Born in 1927, Barbara lived through the Great Depression, World War II, the Korean Conflict, the Vietnam War and watched Neil Armstrong walk on the moon. Before she passed in August, she pondered about AI, trying to imagine how it will change our world.

The youngest of five children born to George Frank Curry and Hazel Vance Curry in Richmond, California, Barbara grew up in the Bay Area. She was a gifted musician and an outstanding teacher. The hallmarks of her 96 years were her love of family, her exceptional work ethic, her creativity and generous nature.

In her early school years, Barbara played violin and piano with Oakland's Weldonian Youth Orchestra, performing in venues all over the Bay Area. At Holy Names High School in Oakland she concentrated on the piano as a soloist and accompanist. One of many unique venues was playing for guests at the Awanhee Hotel in Yosemite. In addition, Barbara was the leader of her own dance band. Her dance band performed throughout the Bay Area, including USO dances in San Francisco. The high point of this era was Barbara's solo performance at the San Francisco Opera House, playing Rachmaninoff's Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No.2 in C Minor. She was the recipient of a scholarship to study piano with a well-known piano teacher in Los Angeles. However, she was in love with Carl Pedersen, accepted his marriage proposal and declined the scholarship to study piano in Los Angeles.

Sadly, the marriage did not endure. Eventually, Barbara left Berkeley with her daughter Karen to live and work with her parents in their business at the Big Geysers Resort in Sonoma County. When Karen went to elementary school, they moved to Cloverdale and Barbara decided to return to college. She commuted to Santa Rosa and Rohnert Park, graduating and receiving her teaching credential with the first graduating class of Sonoma State University. During those years going to college, Barbara and Karen drove up every week-end, and spent summer vacations helping her parents at the resort.

In 1963, Barbara secured a job teaching kindergarten in Santa Rosa, thoroughly enjoying

her career for the next thirty years. Former students returned as adults and requested Mrs. Pedersen for their own children. Barbara was a creative teacher, paving the way for fun, skills and progress for her students. First grade teachers, in fact, often thanked Barbara for her students because they had good skill sets and were well prepared students. Christmas programs were a must-see, with music, skits, singing, costumes, balloons, glitter and glee - all to the delight of the students and their parents. Additionally, Barbara had her students paint large murals on colored butcher paper that were yards long. Mural themes varied from holidays to the seasons. They were beautiful and charming. Local restaurants asked to display them, again, much to the delight of the students and their parents.

Throughout her teaching career, Barbara continued to help her parents on the week-ends and every summer vacation. In their elder years, Barbara also cared for her mother and aunt in her home in Santa Rosa. Most touching, she was always a proud and steadfast supporter of her daughter Karen. Thank you, thank you, Wonderful Mom!

Barbara is survived by her daughter Karen Pettigrew, grandchildren Charles "Cal" Pettigrew (Crystal) and Brie Aalto (Emil), in addition to great-grandsons Peyton Pettigrew, Logan Pettigrew, Arthur Aalto and Mahon Aalto. Further, she is survived by nephews Michael Maloney (Linda), Brother Patrick Maloney SDB, Steven Curry and Stacy Curry. She was predeceased by her parents and four siblings.

Barbara requested no services. A private gathering will be held at a later date to honor Barbara. Donors may make a memorial contribution in Barbara's name to an organization of their choice.

# Cemetery Details

## Tulocay Cemetery

411 Coombsville Rd  
Napa, CA 94558